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نحمدہٗ ونصلی علی رسولہ الکریم

PRIMITIVE MAN'S RELIGION AND HIS CONCEPTION OF GOD

This subject was beautifully dealt with by Amirul Momineen Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II in his lecture in the annual *Jalsa* of 1938. A summary of this lecture appeared in the Urdu Review of Religions, March 1939, which has been followed in this article.—*Editor.*

Belief in the existence of God as the Intelligent Creative Genius at the back of the Universe led one immediately to a couple of inter-related conclusions: (1) the prime necessity for man to know what ultimate aim the Creator had in view with regard to him; and his inability to make that discovery by himself. In the case of the rocks and the lower forms of Life, ignorance on that point did not matter: they were so constituted that it was impossible for them to behave except in a given manner. They invariably served the purpose of the Divine Scheme. But to man was given the power of initiative and free will; and these faculties made it possible for him to march in quite the opposite direction from the one which the Creator intended him to pursue. Gifted with free will, he had to have some knowledge of the Divine Scheme so that he should *choose* to go with it and not waste his life by pulling, out of ignorance, in the opposite direction.

The second point, *i.e.*, the inability of man to discover for himself the goal of human life, was too self-evident a point to need any further reasoning. In any case this discovery was not of a nature that could

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be made off-hand, and it was impossible to conceive of an Intelligent Creator leaving generation after generation to stumble in the dark.

To avoid any confusion it may be mentioned here in passing that the case of scientific research and invention was fundamentally different from knowledge with regard to the goal of human life. If a man died without discovering all the properties of matter, the loss to him was not so grievous as his death in ignorance of the purpose for which God had created him. In the domain of science man therefore could well be left to himself so that he should exercise his intellect, his powers of observation, reasoning and inference, to reap a double harvest—mental development consequent upon the exercise of those powers and gradual accumulation of knowledge with regard to the secrets of nature. But knowledge with regard to the goal of his life had to be vouchsafed to man as soon as his mental development had brought him to the stage where he was capable of grasping it.

The desire to know something as to how the Universe came into existence, as to who was the first man, and what kind of life he lived, was a natural desire. One interesting point of view on these questions was the old Testament point of view :

> " The earth was without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light : and there was light. And God saw the light that it was good : and God divided the light from darkness. And He called light day, and the darkness he called night. And the evening and morning were the first day. And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters And God made the firmament and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament. and it was so. And God called the firmament heaven. And the evening and morning were the first day. And God said, Let the waters under heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear : and it was so. And God called the dry land Earth, and the gathering together of the water He called seas : and God saw that it was good."

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Then God let the earth bring forth vegetation and God saw that it was good. Next God created lights in the firmament, *i.e.*, the sun and the moon and the stars. Then He created moving things upon the earth and fowls that fly in the air, and also submarine life. The next step was the creation of man in His own image and a garden for man to live in. Woman was created from a rib taken out of Adam while he slept. She was to be his companion and wife.[1]

In the 19th century, when some thinkers gave serious thought to the question, Darwin gave out a new theory in regard to the creation of man. He said that man had come into being by a gradual and slow process, passing from stage to stage in millions of years. His point of view was in direct opposition to the story given in Genesis. Stated briefly his theory was that man as we knew him to-day was not the result of a sudden quick process but of a very slow evolution; and that he had evolved from a kind of ape that was now extinct.

Darwin based his theory on the difference between the skull and skeleton of the modern man and that of the early man as brought to light by the science of archæology. His second argument in support of his view was that the human seed in the womb passed through stages in which it resembled the forms through which the embryo of some lower animals passed before birth. This fact he understood to imply that man, before he assumed the present form, had passed through the stages which now he went through while in embryo. Thirdly he said that points of close resemblance between man and the ape bespoke of the fact that man had branched off to evolve into the present form from a creature not much different from an ape.

Darwin's theory shook to the foundations Church conceptions in regard to the creation of the Universe and the origin of man, and both the old and the new Testaments have failed to return any answer.

1. Genesis, Chapters 1, 2, 3.

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Recent researches point to the view, supported by eminent scientists like Professor Jones and Dr. Osbourne, that man had no doubt reached the present stage through a long process of evolution, but the human species had become separated from other forms of life at a stage considerably earlier than the one represented by the ape, and that ever since it had evolved along separate, independent lines. In any case man did not emerge all of a sudden.

Now let us turn to the view presented by the Holy Quran. In Surah Nuh we read that God created man by a process which extended over a long time and was divided into successive stages. The heavenly bodies, as well as the earth, too, were formed by a similar process of evolution, and the first stage in the creation of man was the stage when God brought him out of the earth like vegetation springing therefrom.

> "What is the matter with you that you do not hope for greatness from Allah? And indeed He created you through successive grades. Do you not see how Allah has created the seven heavens alike and made the moon a light therein and made the sun a lamp! and Allah has made you grow out of the earth as a growth." (lxxi.: 13—17).

Evidently, then, the theory of evolution discovered by European scientists as late as the 19th century was presented in the Holy Quran nearly twelve centuries earlier.

The second point to be learnt from the Quran was that at one stage in the creation of the universe man was non-existent. This was clearly stated in the following verse:

> "Does not man remember that We have created him, and before that he was nothing." (xix: 67).

The second stage in the creation of man was when he had a kind of body but no brain or mind. This was the stage immediately preceding the one in which mental evolution started. This might have been some rock like formation or some kind of vegetable beginning:

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"Did not there come a time over man when he was not a thing that could be spoken of?" (lxxvi: 1).

i.e., he had a body but no sense of feeling.

The third stage was when he began to take birth from the compound seed of male and female:

"Surely we have created man from a small life-seed uniting itself." (lxxvi: 2).

At this stage he had evolved into the male and female whose offspring began to multiply.

The fourth stage led to the fifth when man became *sami'* and *basir* (lxxvi: 2), *i.e.*, he developed a faculty for research and invention.

During the third stage of his evolution man was similarly circumstanced as other forms of animal life: he could see and feel. But when he emerged into the fourth stage he had outstripped other animals; his mind took a leap but other forms of life were held back by the bar which he was able to clear.

It was interesting to note that the Holy Quran had mentioned only the beginnings of some of the most important stages in the evolution of man, knowledge of which had a fundamental bearing upon the problems of life as perceived by a rational human being. Not being a treatise on geology and anthropology, it had left out the other stages to be discovered by man himself through the exercise of his mental faculties.

According to the Quranic view when man had evolved into a rational being and stood on the threshold of civilisation, the first man whose mental faculties attained to that stage of development was called Adam by God. God revealed Himself to Adam and set him on the road that led to the ultimate realisation of the goal of human life. The mission entrusted to Adam by God was to pull his people in the same direction. These people on the other hand were not quite as far advanced mentally as Adam, and many of them stood up in opposition and refused to accept the changes which Adam sought to introduce in the light of Divine Guidance.

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Adam was called by that name because he emerged from the caves and took to life in shelters he constructed in the open on the surface of the earth—a mode of life in consequence of which he acquired a brown sun-burnt complexion. The word *Adim* in Arabic meant the surface of the earth, and *Udamatun* meant a tanned wheat-coloured complexion. *Adam* thus would mean either a being who dwelt in the open on the surface of the earth, or one with a wheat-coloured, sun-burnt complexion. In the previous stage when each man had lived for himself, with no conception of community or co-operation, he had lived in caves as in that state he could better defend himself against his enemies; and long habbit had so accustomed him to this solitary and savage life that he was not disposed to look with favour upon the radical change proposed in his life. Naturally he must have felt that living in the open he would be constantly exposed to attack. Besides, personal restraints imposed in the interests of the new forming community must have been galling to him in the extreme.

Therefore, while some followed the lead of Adam, others violently refused to accept this yoke. Those who came out of the caves and took to dwelling in the open in rude shelters, learnt, under Adam's instruction, to co-operate in warding off danger, and developed a sense of community with rudiments of moral restraint without which the communal nucleus could not function.

The superior type of man newly come into being was called Adam because he had emerged from the caves and started to live in shelters he made for himself out on the open surface of the earth. For similar reasons, to those who did not follow the example set by him, the word *jin* was applied which meant "those who lived in darkness or concealment." At this stage mankind split into two branches: the followers of Adam, and those who continued to live in caves in a savage state. The followers of Adam had now emerged into a stage of human evolution to which the Arabic word *insan* (root *uns*, meaning

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inclination towards, co-operation, fellow-feeling, love) was applied.

As mentioned above, the word *jin* in Arabic meant those who lived in darkness, concealed, or in seclusion. In the last sense it was applied to kings, chieftains and big men who could not as frequently be seen as common men. The word was also used for remote tribes of whom little was known. It was thus a very appropriate expression for those who refused to submit to the leadership of Adam and continued in the old mode of life.

It is evident from the Quran that Adam was not the first man. God says:—

> "And when your Lord said to the angels, I am going to place in the earth a *Khalifa*" (successor or vicegerent).

Had Adam been the first man God would have said that he was about to create man: what he said was that he was about to create a *Khalifa*, *i.e.*, vicegerent or a successor. This showed very clearly that the human species was already in existence among whom Adam was to act as the vicegerent of God and to replace the earlier species by a superior type of man. Similarly in another place the Holy Quran says:

> And certainly We created you, then We fashioned you, then We said to the angels: make obeisance to Adam. (vii: 11).

The human species, thus, was already in existence and had already passed through several stages of evolution when Adam came on the scene. It should be noted that the creation of man (in the *plural*, as indicated by *kum*) is here spoken of as having taken place earlier and his evolution was already in progress when the angels received the Divine Command to do obeisance to Adam.

The Quran also made it clear that Adam and Iblis both belonged to the human species:

> "But the *Shaitan* caused them both (Adam and his wife) to fall, and caused them to depart from the state in which they were, and We said: Get forth....." (ii: 36).

The word *ihbetu* (plural form) indicated that it was not addressed to Adam and his wife alone

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for in that case it should have been in the *tathniyah* form. This command was addressed to Adam, his wife and his followers, as well as to Iblis and those who were of his way of thinking. As a conflict had risen between the two types of men, they were ordered to move off to some other locality where the conditions of life were expected to make that conflict less severe, or, in effect, of less account.

The word occurring in xx : 123 was *ihbeta* which was *tathniya*, where it meant two types or groups of men. That it did not mean two persons was made clear by the word *jami'a* meaning "all." Obviously, the word *jami'a* would not have been used had *ihbeta* referred to two persons.

Further proof of the fact that Adam and Iblis belonged to the same species was furnished by anothor verse which ran :

> And We said : Go forth from this, all of you ; but whenever there should come to you a guidance from Me, then whosoever would follow My guidance, no fear shall come upon them, nor shall they grieve (ii : 38).

Both branches of the human species were thus ordered to move away and disperse after the split had occurred, but with the injunction that whenever Divine Guidance was vouchsafed to them in future those who accepted it, they would have no cause to regret that course, nor any grief or anxiety. This verse indicated plainly that the followers of *Shaitan* could very well change into followers of Adam or *vice versa* whenever a fresh message came from God. vii : 25 went so far as to say that the earth was the common habitation in this life of the progeny of Adam as well as Iblis.

The only difference between the two was, thus, no more than a difference in moral behaviour on account of which both came to be designated by different names. The two words *jin* and *ins* had at their back the same idea as in the case of the modern words *Momin* (believer) and *kafir* (unbeliever). Those to whom the word *ins* was applied were those who gathered together into a nucleus of community-life based upon co-operation

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and some moral restraints—in other words, those who became civilized. Those denoted by the word *jin*, on the other hand, were those who held away from this nucleus of a better life and continued in the savage state. The two words, therefore, denoted no more than what in terms of anthropology was conveyed by the expressions "cave man" and the "dawn of civilization."

In xxxviii : 76 Iblis is reported as saying: "You created me from fire while him (Adam) you created from clay mixed with water. This verse, however, was not to be understood to mean that it assigned to Iblis a separate origin. When the life of both, their death and resurrection under the same set of circumstances was definitely established, as we noticed earlier, the verse now under discussion had to be interpreted in a manner so as not to clash with that clear statement, especially when such an interpretation involved no far-fetched meaning contrary to the common usage of the language. In Arabic the expression *Kholiqa min folanin* was common enough, which meant that the person in question was made from such and such a thing. The idea expressed by the phrase was that such and such a thing was the dominant element in his make up. In the Quran itself one read:

"Man was made from haste" (xxi : 37)

which meant that impatience and haste were notable features of human mentality. Impatience had no physical body so that man could be made from that substance. The verse, therefore, could only mean that impatience was a prominent characteristic of man. In another place one read

"Allah is He who created you from weakness" (xxx : 54).

Weakness, again, was no physical substance that man could be created from it. Evidently the verse could only mean that in many respects weakness was a noticeable feature in the growth and development of man. In the infant stage it was the most outstanding feature. These examples made the meaning of the verse under discussion quite clear. The meaning implied by *Iblis* was that he was of a firy (savage)

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nature which could not tolerate any restraints; while Adam was soft and plaint like potter's clay which could be moulded into any desired shape.

Adam and his followers, therefore, accepted the restraints and obligations of moral law, but many savage natures rose in rebellion against the new fetters and proclaimed in proud disdain that they were not prepared to submit to domination : they reserved complete freedom of action in the name of " liberty ", which only meant continued savagery. The pliant natures on the other hand submitted themselves to be moulded into better form. This division, and the conflict involved, continued even to-day ; but both types still lived and laboured and struggled and died on this earth from which they had both sprung from the earth to be raised to life once more on the day of resurrection. And whenever Prophets of God and His messengers came, they sounded the call equally to both types.

The Holy Quran contained a fairly clear and comprehensive, though necessarily a brief account of the new order which the dawn of civilization, brought about through the ministry of Adam, represented. Faith in the existence of God and a rudimentary sort of conception with regard to Him took birth in the heart of man at this stage ; but the religious teaching given to him was confined to the most simple moral ideas which served as the first foundation of community-life. (1) As was evident from the words *qulna ya adamo* (We said, O Adam), Revelation from God had started to come to man, and (2) he was bidden to alter his savage way, come out of the caves and to live, in shelters in the open, with his fellowmen in a community of common interest. (3) xx : 123 indicated that a number of men had accepted the new order and put themselves under the leadership of Adam. (4) The word *aljannah* showed that man at the time lived on fruit and the first settlement was established in some fertile locality abounding in wild fruits. (5) Prior to this new order man had not yet learnt the use of clothes but in the changed circumstances of his life he soon contrived to cover his body, as was evidenced by the words: *wa tafiqa yakhsifani*

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'alaihema min waraqil jannah (and they both began to cover themselves with leaves from the garden. vii : 22) (6) The main interests of the community which held the establishment together were co-operation in procuring food and defence against the enemy and the weather. This was clearly deducible from " You would not hunger therein nor suffer from thirst, nor remain naked nor be exposed to the sun." (xx : 118—9).

Some people understood this passage to imply that in the paradise in which he lived Adam was so constituted that he never hungered. But this view was not correct, as was shown by " And eat from the plentious (food) as you wish " (ii : 35). (7) By means of Revelation from God Adam was also tought the qualities of a number of herbs. " And He taught Adam the names, all of them" (ii : 31). " All " here meant " numerous," or " all which were necessary for him." The word *kul* was frequently used in Arabic in this sense. In the Holy Quran too there were many instances of the use of this word in this meaning as, for example, in xxvii : 23. (8) " I am about to create a vicegerent on the earth " showed that man was directed in the new order to put himself under the leadership of a chief ; (9) and transgressions against that order were punishable, as was borne out by ii : 30. Men in the savage state, which was being remedied, must have often fought against each other and killed each other; and these conflicts and the consequent bloodshed could not have puzzled the angels at that moment for by then it was an old story. But conflict and bloodshed as a moral necessity against the transgressor was a new idea which puzzled them. (10) And, finally, sex relations, too, were regulated and marriage instituted, as was indicated by the mention of Adam's spouse.

Careful study of the Quran revealed, moreover, that there had been a number of Adams in this world, and this point had been adequately made clear by the Promised Messiah in his writings. Separated from

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each other by geographical barriers, as soon as any locality produced a man capable of becoming the bearer of God's first Revelation, that Revelation came to him and he become the Adam of that locality and established a nucleus of civilization, of progress in physical well-being, and for the cultivation of the moral sense. On these early foundations successive Prophets of God had built more and more beautiful edifices until Mohammad (peace be upon him, and upon his predecessors) completed the plan.

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THE VEDAS AND THEIR REVELATION—II

*Shabda Brahm** was the root cause of Revelation. When answering questions about the need of Revelation, its manner and methods—in fact when answering all possible questions with regard to Revelation such as "by whom", "where", "when", "why", "how", etc., Sanskrit grammarians fall back upon Shabda Brahm. To sum up their views:

By claiming only *illumination* for all things and denying their *creation* the Sankh School did not mean to imply a refutation of the Mimansa view that the *Shabda* was eternal. Sankh philosophy only emphasised the indestructibility of matter. Shabda was eternal because *Akash deshat Shabda*. To understand this expression we had to bear in mind that there were various kinds of matter, each with separate qualities of its own. There were five *Maha-bhutas* (elements): prithwi (earth); jal (water); tej (fire); wayu (air); and akash (ether or space). The elements were five because, for the purpose of bringing the phenominal world in contact with the brain-cells, we had the same number of sense-organs. We could learn of the qualities of the five elements only by means of these sense-organs, *i.e.*, the eye, the ear, nose, tounge and skin. The quality of an orange which we perceived with the help of our eyes proceeded from those component parts of the orange which came from the tej (fire) element; those which we could taste, came from water; those which could smell, came from earth; those we could feel with the skin came from wayu (air); and those we could hear came from akash (space). The specific quality of Akash was Shabda. Akash was all pervading and everlasting; and matter and its qualities being

*Shabda Brahm=Hebrew Memra=Gr. Logos, as explained by the Greek philosopher Heraclitus of Ephesus (C. 535—455 B.C.): "There is one Logos, the same throughout the world, which is itself homogeneous and one."

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insaparable Shabda, too, was all-pervading and everlasting. When we spoke, the movement of the tounge, in accordance with *tarang-nyay* (wave theory), created a movement in the air, which, having been transmitted to the tympanum, created in us the sense we called sound. In ordinary sounds, the cries of birds and beasts, the human word, and in God's voice there was a difference which was only a difference of degree, so to say. Specific sounds had specific meanings. The voice of God was not a sound which the ordinary physical human ear could catch. It was only when man was in a particular *mano-vrithi* (mental state) created by *yagaj-jyan* (a state of higher intuition) that he could catch it. The varying range of individual ability or disability to catch the voice of God was very well illustrated by the varying ability of different objects of nature to reflect back rays of light thrown upon them.

According to this theory of Sanskrit grammarians instinct in the lower animals and intuition in man differed only in so far as the former represented a less developed stage of a basic urge common to all living things; and the greatest difficutly in this theory is that it leaves no room to make any clear distinction between Revelation and inspiration on the one hand and human discovery and human research on the other.

How did the voice of God reach man? Sanskrit grammarians sought to illustrate their answer to this question by a reference to the mystifying performance of a necromancer who from the limited cavity in his mouth could produce heavy marble or metal balls of considerable size and incredible quantities of nails and other objects very awkward to be kept hidden and stored in the mouth. Other people who did not possess that skill, who had not mastered that art, could not do what a necromancer did with such apparent ease. Our idea of the art and skill of the necromancer, magnified to the extreme limits, could serve as an example, of course very crude and inade-

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quate, of God's ability to create a voice that had no physical origin, which could not be picked up by means of our physical sense-organs, but which, nevertheless, was more tangible and real than anything man had knowledge of. God, thus, was the necromancer, so to say, and the witness of the performance was the receiver of Divine Revelation—the seer or rishi. The time of the performance depended wholely upon the necromancer, the part played by the rishi being confined to his response. Revelation, therefore, was a kind of interplay between God who gave the Revelation and the rishi who received it. The "when" "how", and "why" in this interplay depended upon God, and what depended upon the rishi was only the quality of the response.

Sanskrit grammarians explained variations in the quality of the response as being due to the difference in the capacities of the various receivers. When a man with normal eyesight looked at a white conch-shell he perceived it in the right colour. But when a man suffering from *pandu-roga* (jaundiced vision) saw it, the conch-shell appeared to him to be yellow. Again, a man who suffered from night-blindness could see nothing at all after sunset although another man with normal sight could see well enough even in darkness to be able to move about with considerable assurance. Then again, consciousness, sub-consciousness and deep sleep were, in reality, no more than differences in response. Response, therefore, was one of the major factors in Revelation. As modern psychologists believed, no valid distinction could be drawn between subjective and objective experience, since all experience contained both subjective and objective elements. Accordingly it was very difficult to separate the real Revelation from that which was mixed with elements of our mind.

When an acid was introduced into a clean basin full of nice fresh milk, the response of the milk depended upon the quantity and quality of the acid introduced, upon the receptacle of the milk being clean or otherwise, and upon the quantity and quality of the

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milk itself. The curd produced was sometimes in a thick even mass of uniform consistency, with a nice pleasant smell; on other occasions the result was not so good; while some times the milk was altogether spoiled. Just as, in accordance with the laws of physical chemistry, the changes took place in that milk, similarly changes took place in the sphere which we might call the sphere of mental or spiritual chemistry.

God's voice, therefore, fell into two divisions: *Nirbhuj* (unaffected) and *pra-trin* (broken); and the latter in itself was divided into two kinds. In one the voice of God was the real predominant voice; in the other it was mixed with the reasoning power and imagination of the receiver to set his thoughts flowing in a certain channel. The former of those was called *nantra* in vedic terminology and the latter *chandas* according to *Nirukta* of *Yaska Acharya*.

One important question was: "How and in what way did God give Revelation. The Hindu answer to this question in the light of the Vedas was that God bestowed His Revelation by way of *yog-vidya*, one part of this yog-vidya being the yoga mysticism and the other being what is called *par-pur-pravesh*, which expression may be explained as telepathy. The science of telepathy recognises the existence of mental waves. The difference in telepathy with reference to man and telepathy with reference to God was that in the latter case the medium was far more subtle and sensitive and effective. However, this metaphor suffices to explain the basis of the inference.

The Vedanta View

Vedant Darshan is the most standard work of Vedanta philosophy, of which there are eight commentaries. The best known among these are *Sharisik-bhashya* by Shanker Achariya and *Shribhashya* by Ramanuja. English translations, by Dr. Thibaut, of both these books have been published in the Sacred Books of the East, edited by Professor Fredrick Maxmuller.

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In *Vedant Darshan*, *adhyae* 1, *pad* 1, *sutr* 3, and *adhyae* 2, *pad* 2, *sutr* 43, the need of Revelation and its giver have been discussed. Needless to say that belief in Revelation presupposed belief in the existence of God. The starting point of Vedanta philosophy was God, for which the Vedanta expression was *Brahma*, meaning "great". While discussing Brahma *Vedant Darshan* draws attention to the fact that the idea of relativity was inherent in this conception. Relativity, however, involved duality; but, from this point of view, should one attack the Monism of the Vedanta School, its answer was that the attack originated in *avidya* (ignorance). In this avidya lay the secret of the basis of the Universe—the secret of the Supreme Being appearing in multifarious shapes and forms. But for the relativity inherent in the idea Brahma there would have been only He, and there could have been no question in that case of our knowing Him as we should have been non-existent. That was the reason why God assumed the form of an infinite variety of physical objects comprising the universe. The universe was no more than the *leela* (work) of Brahma. Running parallel to the Work, was the Word of God and this Word was called Ved. To questions such as "why", "how", "where", "whence", etc., the Vedanta answer was always the same: Divine Will, Divine Wisdom, and Divine Power.

Once Divine Will was recognised as the pivot of the Universe, there was absolutely no need for any further argument. All quaries were met by Vedanta philosophy with the answer that these matters were *anir-vachnya* (inexpressable). Both the Work of God and the Word of God depended upon His Will, and that was all that we knew or could know. Our *avidya* (ignorance) barred the way to further knowledge, and our ignorance made us argue round and round in a circle, preventing thereby our escape from that ignorance. By leaving these vain arguments and putting one's faith completely in Revelation one could find the key to this riddle, which, shorn of the technicalities of Vedanta philosophy, was tantamount to a

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recognition that we were Brahma Himself but we were encased completely in a shroud of ignorance which, as a diversion or manifestation, originated with Brahma Himself—in other words, with ourselves. The moment one realised that, the shroud was torn and one merged back into Brahma—became Himself once more, reverting to complete Monism. This was Vedanta emancipation or salvation.

For example, the ether which surrounded the earth was one and the same everywhere. Now, was the air inside a hollow rubber ball different and separate from the ether that surrounded the earth? When such a ball was burst open, where did the air go that had filled it? Obviously, that air was not really separate from the atmosphere surrounding the earth; only it was encased in a covering. As soon as that covering was torn it was instantaneously swallowed up by the atmosphere and was entirely lost in it.* Similarly Brahma too was one and only one. He was omnipresent. *Sat* (existence), *chit* (knowledge), and *anand* (bliss) were His main attributes; and the Universe was the result of these attributes. Some aspects of the Universe manifested *sat*; others manifested *chit*; while certain others manifested *anand*: but always *minus* what we understood by "supreme". The moment, however, the shell of our ignorance was shattered, we emerged as *sachdanand* (supreme bliss) which was a quality of Brahma. Dualism, as opposed to Monism, was thus no more than an illusion.

In proportion to the variation in our qualities of *sat* and *chit* and *sachdanand* there occurred the difference in the ability to catch the Words of God, and herein lay the answer to questions as to who received Revelation? when and how? Combination of these attributes went to make up the environment of the receiver which determined the quality of his response. In receiving a wireless message one thing

*Among Western Philosophers Spinoza, when explaining pantheism, lays stress on the theory that "all is one and one is all." He also repeats this analogical argument of Shankar Vedant.

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necessary was the appropriate time for catching that message; another was that the receiving instrument should be tuned in to pick it up; and a third factor was the tranquillity of the atmosphere; and so on. Similar factors made the reception of Divine Revelation correct or incorrect or obscure in the case of the recipients of that Revelation being differently placed in regard to these determining factors.

To make use of another illustration, the power to throw back a reflection differed widely in the case of a plain unvarnished earthenware, a windowpane, polished metal, a dirty looking-glass and a clean well polished mirror. The earthenware could not throw back any reflection at all; the windowpane showed a dim image, dark and indistinct; and a clean polished mirror was the best for the purpose. For the reception of Divine Revelation an opaque mind, like a piece of earthenware, was not suitable; nor was a concave or convex mirror for that, too, distorted the image. The ideal type for the purpose was a mind that in its capacity to reflect back the rays thrown upon it was like a perfectly flat and thick, well polished mirror. Severe meditation and intense love of God had the power so to polish up the human mind.

The action of a magnet afforded still another example to explain this point. The result of the attraction exerted by a magnet was determined by the distance between the object attracted and that magnet, by the measure of attraction possessed by the magnet, and by the mass of the object attracted; and objects made of wood, for instance, were not attracted at all.

Some scholars, using a layman's language, have said that in the case of a piece of wood burning in the fire at one end, even when almost its whole length had been consumed in the flames, the other end could safely be handled. But a metal bar buried in glowing embers at one end and left like that for some time could not be grasped from the other side without burning the fingers. The reason for this difference

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lay in the varying capacity of wood and metals to conduct heat.

Apart from these examples, however, the human body itself served as a fine illustration of the fact that the same stimulus applied to different parts of the body gave varying results. A pinch of pepper on the palm of one's hand gave a different feel than a pinch put upon the tongue or poured into the eye. The law that governed the human body in this respect was the same which governed the Universe—the *Brahmand*, *i.e.*, egg of Brahma. As an ancient Sanskrit proverb had it: *Yad ande tad pinde, yad pinde tad Brahmande*, which practically meant the same thing as the English proverb "as above, so below".

In calling the Universe "the egg of Brahma" the idea was to draw attention to the fact of incubation. The manner of incubation differed greatly in the case of some birds and animals. Some birds sat on the eggs themselves and kept them warm continually. The cukoo left its eggs in the nests of other birds; while the tortoise buried its eggs in the sand. Among insects there were some which developed from larvæ and pupæ through stages in which they were not tended by the parent insect. In animals which did not lay eggs the young were wrapped in a thin filmy substance which was in truth tantamount to the shell of an egg. All these were different methods of incubation. The Australian Kangaroo carried about its young in its pouch. Animals gave suck while birds fed their young by another method, and some animals did not trouble to feed their young at all, leaving them to fend for themselves from the earliest moment after birth. All these were different ways of bringing up the young. Now the entire Universe, in its widest sense, was the egg of Brahma who was incubating it in all the above ways. Instinct and human recognition and discovery and Divine Revelation were only differences of stage and degree. There was nothing in the Universe that had independent life. Instinct, which was the earliest symptom and characteristic of life, was in itself a gift from God. Instinct, however, did not possess the power to perceive

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God in His true Dignity and Glory. Only that Revelation could rightly be regarded as Revelation which, when bestowed upon man, had the power to fulfil its purpose —*i.e.*, to enable man to know God. A Revelation that failed to produce this result was not real Revelation at all. The likeness of a cow made of clay, or drawn with pencil on a piece of paper, however life-like and elaborately done, had no value as long as the purpose of the cow was to yield milk. That was the utility of a cow, and only that cow was a real cow which could satisfy this utility. The utility of Revelation was to enable man to know God. If it satisfied this condition it was real and genuine Revelation ; otherwise it had no value. Its power to enable man to get into communion with God was the quality wherein lay the difference between Revelation and human discovery.

What was the need of Revelation ? The answer to this question was that our sense organs, to make their power effective, stood in need of auxiliaries. The human eye possessed the power to see but it could not work without the help of external light. Similarly the human mind in its effort to know God stood in need of an auxiliary, a provocative to set the basic instinct working. This auxiliary and provocative was Revelation. *Udaiyan Acharya* in his immortal essay, *Nyay-Kusumanjali* says that fire lay dormant in stone but the friction of one stone upon another brought it out and produced a spark, and this was the primitive way of obtaining fire. Fire, thus, was a *gupt-shakti* of stone. By means of friction this latent energy could be transformed into *parkash* (light) and *tap* (heat). In the same way Revelation brought out the latent energy of the mind ; and once a spark was obtained, not only could you cook your meals and warm yourself, but you could, if you wished, reduce miles and miles of woodland to a heap of ashes. The case of the spark produced by Divine Revelation was very similar. All inventions and discoveries were, in a way, connected with that spark.

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It was common observation that whatever was brought into contact with fire, was warmed by it and even burnt if there was sufficient heat in the furnace. Then, with the help of Revelation once it had come down, why could not everyone enter into communion with God? The answer to this question was that green twigs and leaves did not ignite if thrown into a fire of which the volume and strength was small; but by throwing them into a furnace with sufficient heat, even heavy logs of green fresh cut wood could be easily burnt. Water, on the other hand, no matter how hot in itself, had the quality to put fire out. Very similar was the case of a man who had access to the Ved but failed to know God. *Ajana* (negative of *jana* which means knowledge) stood constantly opposing man's progress towards *jana* and, in most cases, prevented him from knowing God.

The roots of *ajana* lay in evil deeds, and this point brought one face to face with the question: "When God was omni-potent, omni-present and omni-science, why did he suffer the soul to incline towards evil deeds? Was the "self" in man more powerful than God so as to defeat the purpose of God? Moreover, if God was omni-potent, why did He permit evil tendencies to spring up at all? And how could this existence of evil be reconciled with Absolute Monism? Was evil, too, part and parcel of the Supreme Being from whom everything had sprung? If not, then how did evil come into existence? If Brahma desired the good of man why did He not supply him with a key to this riddle?"

Vedanta philosophy jumped out of this dilemma by assuming that the soul was eternal, and ***swatantra*** (possessing free will) in the matter of good and evil deeds. Between two extremes on either side, *i.e.*, God and matter, good and evil, the soul was like a pendulum free to swing in either direction. This, in fact, was the trinity of Vedanta philosophy: Soul, Matter and God.

The difficulty, however, did not end here. There

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still remained the question of time, the commencement and the beginning of the Universe. This question was disposed of by Vedanta philosophy with the words: "Eternal circle." This was the point where reason foundered and faith began. Those who accepted belief were called *Astak* (orthodox) and those who rejected it were called *Nastak*.

This was the basis of the Hindu religion founded on the Vedas. To put the whole discussion in one sentence, the Vedas had their basis in Revelation and Revelation depended upon God. If you ask, "Why?" the answer, as given by Madhu-Sudan Saraswati, was that no matter which of the above theories you accepted, the ultimate point in all was the theory of natural law.

Before concluding this brief study it may be mentioned in passing that many points in the above discussion deserve fuller treatment, but as a bird's-eye-view of the question this brief outline, it is belived, would suffice for the general reader.*

*Translated from Urdu.

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THE FIRST BAI'T AT LUDHIANA

Righteous people had requested Ahmad to accept their Bai't as early as 1883, but he did not like that idea and had no such authority from God; therefore, he always expressed his inability to do so. He was commanded by God in February or March, 1888, to lay the foundations of the Community by inviting people to Bai't—swear allegiance to him. But he did not like all and sundry to join the faith, therefore he waited for a suitable opportunity which presented itself when, at the death of Bashir I, men of a weak and superficial type got separated.

On the 12th of January 1889 (9 Jamadi-ul-Awwal 1306 A.H.)—the blessed day when his Promised Illustrious Son Mahmud Ahmad, was born—Ahmad issued a public invitation for Bai't and announced the condition of initiation into the movement. They are as follows:—

The man who accepts Bai't should firmly make up his mind:—*First*, that upto the day of his death he shall abstain from Shirk, *i.e.*, setting up equals to God. *Secondly*, that he shall keep away from falsehood, adultery, looking at women other than near relatives, cruelty, dishonesty, riot and rebellion, and, in short, every kind of evil: and shall not allow himself to be carried away by his passions, however strong they may be. *Thirdly*, that he shall pray five times a day without fail, according to the commands of Allah and His Messenger and to the best of his ability shall try to offer his Tahajjud prayers (prayers in the latter part of the night), to invoke the blessings of God (Darud) upon His Prophet, to ask pardon for his sins and the help of God, and remembering the blessing of God he shall always praise Him. *Fourthly*, that he shall in no way harm God's creatures in general, and Moslems in particular, under the influence of his passions—neither with his hands, nor with his

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tongue, nor by any other means. *Fifthly*, that in every state of sorrow or pleasure, prosperity or adversity, felicity or misfortune, he shall prove himself faithful to God; and that in every condition he shall accept the decree of God; and that in this way he shall be ready to bear every kind of insult and pain. At the time of any misfortune he shall never turn away from Him but rather he shall advance further. *Sixthly*, that he shall not follow vulgar customs, but shall abstain from evil inclinations; and that he shall completely submit to the authority of the Holy Quran; and that he shall make the sayings of God and His Messenger the guiding principles of his life. *Seventhly*, that he shall fully give up pride and haughtiness and shall pass his days with humility, lowliness, courtesy and meekness. *Eighthly*, that he shall consider religion, the honour of religion and the well-being of Islam dearer than his life, wealth and children, in short dearer than everything else. *Ninthly*, that he shall be, for God's sake, showing sympathy with the creatures of Allah; and to the best of his power he shall use his natural abilities for the welfare of God's creatures. *Tenthly*, that he shall establish a brotherhood with me (the Promised Messiah) on condition of obeying me in everything good, and keep it up to the day of his death; and this relationship shall be of such a high order that its example shall not be found in any worldly relationship either of blood relations or of servant and master.

In March, 1889, Ahmad went to Ludhiana, and there issued a leaflet on the 4th of that month. In it he said that he would stay in the town up to the 25th of March, at a house near that of Munshi Ahmad Jan, Mohalla Jadid. Those who wished to become his followers should for this purpose reach Ludhiana after the 20th of March. After the 25th, such people should come to Qadian. He also explained the meaning, the necessity and the importance of Bai't. He also proposed to keep a regular record of the name and address of every follower. He said further:—"God wishes to found a Community of the Faithful, to manifest His Glory and Power. He will make the Community grow

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and prosper to establish the Love of God, righteousness, purity, piety, peace and goodwill among men. This shall be a group of men devoted to God. He shall strengthen them with His own Spirit, and bless them and purify them. He shall multiply them exceedingly as He has promised. Thousands of truthful men shall join His ranks. He shall Himself look after them and make the Community grow, so much so that its number and progress shall amaze the world. The Community shall be a lighthouse so high as to illumine the four corners of the world. The members thereof shall serve as models of Islamic blessings. My true followers shall excel every other people. There shall always rise among them, till the Judgment Day, personages who will be the chosen ones of God in every respect. So has decreed the Almighty. He can do as He chooses."

After the publication of this leaflet, Ahmad had to go to Hoshiarpur for a few days; for he had been invited by Sh. Mehr Ali, on the occasion of his son's marriage. He was accompanied by M. Abdulla Sanauri, Sh. Hamid Ali and Mir Abbas Ali.

The formal initiation began on the 23rd of March 1889 (20 Rajab, 1306 A.H.). The building in which the foundation of the Community was laid is a small, unpretentious one. On its North and East are two lanes. There was an open space between the Northern and Southern rooms. There were no rooms on the West and the East. The Bai't was taken in the Northern room. The site was acquired by the Community and the Northern room was repaired but the original shape was retained. There are no rooms now in the south and a mosque has been built there recently in the open space.

Ahmad sat in a corner of the room. Sh. Hamid Ali was posted at the door, and candidates were called through him as Ahmad desired. Hazrat Maulvi Noor-ud-Din Sahib was called in first of all. Then were called Mir Abbas Ali, Mian Mohammad Husain Moradabadi, the Copyist, and M. Abdulla Sanauri.

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one or two more were thus called in as named by Ahmad, after which Sh. Hamid Ali was told to let in the candidates one by one. At the beginning Bai't was taken of each one in private, but afterwards people entered the Bai't even in groups.

The ceremony was very simple. Ahmad sat on covered floor and stretched out his right hand which was taken hold of by the candidate as is done while people shake hands. Ahmad then asked the candidate to repeat the words he said while his hand was kept clasped. The words were as follows: "I repent to-day, at the hand of. Ahmad, of all the sins and bad habits to which I was addicted; and most truthfully and solemnly do I promise that, to the last day of my life, I shall eschew, to the best of my ability, all manner of sin. I will give preference to religion over all material considerations, comforts and luxuries. I shall try, as far as I can, to observe the ten conditions of Bai't laid down in the leaflet dated 12th January, 1889. I seek forgiveness of God for my past sins." These words were repeated in Urdu; and after this the following words were repeated in Arabic:—

استغفر اللہ ربی استغفر اللہ ربی استغفر اللہ ربی
من کل ذنب و اتوب الیہ - اشھد ان لا الہ الا اللہ وحدہ
لا شریك لہ و اشھد ان محمداً عبدہ و رسولہ - رب انی
ظلمت نفسی و اعترفت بذنبی فاغفرلی ذنوبی فانہ لا
یغفر الذنوب الا انت -

i.e. "I beg pardon of Allah my Heavenly Father, (three times) for all my sins, and turn to Him. I bear witness that there is none worthy to be worshipped except God who is One and who has no partner. And I bear witness that Mohammad is His Servant and Apostle. O my Heavenly Father, I have wronged my soul and I confess all my sins Pray forgive me my sins as there is none other who can forgive."

Having finished the Arabic words, Ahmad drew out his hand and lifted up both his hands for prayer. The

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candidate also did the same. When the prayer was finished the ceremony was completed. There was no immersion, baptism or anything else which characterises the initiation into other faiths, where the letter of the law is in such grave danger of replacing its spirit.

Bai't is not merely a ceremony of initiation, but also a most solemn covenant with God through the leader, who takes hold of the hand of the initiate in order to impress upon him the profound nature of his undertaking. This contact also helps to deepen his consciouness of his obligation and to increase within him the strength to carry it out.

The Holy Founder of Islam took Bai't on three different occasions. One is mentioned in XLVIII : 18 of the Holy Quran on the occasion of Hudaibiyya, and it is known as Bai't-i-Rizwan. Twice Bai't was taken at Mecca before the Flight. In the first there were only 12 men and the promise was: "We will not serve any one but Allah ; we will not steal, we will not commit adultery, we will not kill our children, we will not slander, and we will not disobey the Prophet in anything that is right." The second took place at Aqaba, where 73 men undertook to defend the Holy Prophet. Women also swore a pledge of allegiance to the Prophet ; and this is mentioned in LX : 12 of the Quran. It may be mentioned here that at the Bai't of women there was no clasping of hands. The Prophet never touched the hands of a woman other than his own.

The Venue

The selection of Ludhiana for Bai't seems to be something more than an accident. Ahmad appears to have left Qadian for Ludhiana only for this purpose. I am inclined to think, therefore, that the Divine Hand was working beneath. Hence, it would not, perhaps, be out of place to know a little more of this town. Ahmad had been to Ludhiana more than once before the Bai't.

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It is situated in the Punjab, 8 miles from the Sutlej and 228 miles by rail N. W. of Delhi. It is an important railway junction. In 1901 its population was 48,640. It is a big grain centre, and has manufactures of shawls, etc., by Kashmiri weavers, and of scarves, turbans, furniture and carriages.

"The town of Ludhiana was founded in 1480 by two of the Lodi race (then ruling at Delhi), from whom it derives its name, and was built in great part from the prehistoric bricks of Sunet. The Lodies continued in possession until 1620, when it again fell into the hands of the Rais of Raikot. Throughout the palmy days of the Moghul Empire, the Raikot family held sway, but the Sikhs took advantage of the troubled period which accompanied the Moghul decadence to establish their supremacy South of the Sutlej. Several of their chieftains made encroachments on the domains of the Rais, who were able to hold their own only by the aid of George Thomas, the famous adventurer of Hariana. In 1806 Ranjit Singh crossed the Sutlej and reduced the obstinate Mohammedan family, and distributed their territory amongst his co-religionists." The town came under the English about the time of Ahmad's birth.

There are two points which strike one in connection with Ludhiana. It was in those days a very active centre of Christian missionaries. The leading Christian paper, *Noor Afshan*, was published from here. Its first issue was on March 6, 1873. The Mission High School of Ludhiana was one of the oldest schools in India, and it was in a very flourishing condition. Another High school was known as the Christian Board School, and was run on residential lines. The former has been recently converted into a market and the school has ceased to exist, which is a sure sign of the decay of the Mission. But Dr. Brown's female hospital, founded perhaps in 1894 by the American Presbyterian Mission, shows that Christian Missionary activity is still carried on in that town, though it has

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now lost most of its momentum.*

In those days the Muslim priestcraft also was in the ascendant in Ludhiana. Very influencial Maulvis lived there, and their followers were spread far and wide. The first Muslim paper in English in the Punjab was also subsequently started from Ludhiana. Comparatively speaking, the town was advanced culturally as well.

* The Western Foreign Missionary Society of America sent two Young Missionaries to India in 1832. One of them died; and the other Rev. J. C. Lorry D.D. reached Ludhiana on November 5, 1834, and laid there the foundation of the first Christian Mission in the Punjab. The population of Ludhiana at that time was about 20,000. A Sikh Raja, who was under the protection of English, ruled the town, there were no Christians in the Punjab before this.

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REVIEWS

The Defeat of War: can Pacifism achieve it, *by Kenneth Ingram, Allen and Unwin, London 3s. 6d.*

Written in the anxious days which succeeded the settlement of Munich, this book is a thoughtful and bold study of the problem that seems to baffle solution—the problem of ensuring freedom and security and a lasting world peace.

Peace could be easily achieved by following the way of the Pacifist. But the difficulty about it was that it was likely to prove peace at the cost of freedom and security. Surrender to brute force could not guarantee that greed, personal vain-glory and grotesque, overbearing national aspirations would be checked thereby and frozen out of life.

Mr. Kenneth Ingram is of the opinion that Pacifism is more in accord with the spirit and teaching of Jesus Christ, and that the case in the Gospels in favour of Pacifism is stronger than the case against it: "Christ undoubtedly preached Pacifism." However, "what the Christian has to do—what all men who are on the side of progress and creativity have to do—is to determine whether the moment for the absolute application of Pacifism has been reached. If there are still obstacles preventing its application, it is the duty of all of us to begin to clear away these obstacles."

Whether Christ taught Pacifism or not was a question for the Christians to decide. But a non-Christian may be pardoned for asking what one should think of a teacher who preached a principle which even 19 centuries after his death could not be put into practice. If it be true that ideas put into the minds of men at a premature time could be as harmful as premature action, then either Christ did not teach Pacifism, or he was not a good teacher.

Naturally this book strongly condemns Chamberlain's foreign policy which led to Munich, and events since Munich have shown that this verdict is just. But it is well to remember that one great good has come to Great Britain, (and the cause of liberty for the matter of that) from Munich and the humiliations suffered by the proud mistress of the seas in Europe and in the Near and Middle East before that tragic event. As a reaction of the sickening carnage in the last war, a considerabe volume of opinion, on one ground or another, was obsessed with Pacifism not as a distant ideal but as a principle to be applied immediately should the war fever get a grip over Europe again. Had Britain taken the field over Abysinia, or the Spanish question, or Japan's attitude in

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China, or even Czechoslovakia, publish opinion in support of the Government would never have been so solid as it is now. If Mr. Chamberlain followed the road to Munich in order to kill Pacifism in the hearts of Britons before he took the Dictators on, he was more shrewd in the weakness he displayed, and more strong, than those who took advantage of that weakness.

As for the solution proposed by Mr. Kenneth Ingram in the concluding portion of the book, it raises too big an issue to be adequately dealt with in the course of a short review. But apart from the question of details and its precise form, an international machinery, so constituted as to ensure fair-play for just national aspirations, was the only way out of the mess into which our world had landed itself.

Rabindranath Tagore, *by Professor V. Lesny, translated by Guy Mckveer Philips, Allen and Unwin, London. 8s. 6d.*

This book offers a study of the personality and work of Tagore written on the basis of personal acquaintanceship with the poet, and we have Tagore's own testimony as to the author's penetration and grasp.

The book opens with a personal letter from the glamorous poet of Bengal which contains the following statement :—

" It is nothing short of miraculous how in a short time you have entered into the spirit of the Bengali language and my writings. I have never seen such strong critical ability in any other foreigner."

This certificate should ensure that those who admire the art of Tagore would find Professor Lesny's book enjoyable and instructive. On page 28, however, there is a statement that needs correction, though it is a statement that has no bearing upon Tagore. It is stated that " Darashikoh, the eldest son of Shah Jahan (1628—58), fell under Indian influence ; he interpretted verses of the Koran in the spirit of Indian pantheistic philosophy. Later, at the end of the nineteenth century, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Khan (1839—1908) launched a similar movement." If by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Khan the writer means the founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement (and the dates given indicate that he does) it must be pointed out that he never wrote the word " Khan " with his name ; and there is absolutely no basis for the implication that the founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement interpreted verses of the Quran " in the spirit of Indian pantheistic philosophy." Those who are familiar with the works of this great reformer of the age would only laugh at this novel view.

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